

Securing Explosives in Our Own Back Yard - And Across the Country

This fall, Tom arranged a hearing in San Mateo to hold federal officials accountable for keeping track of high explosives of the type that had been stolen from a storage shed near the Crystal Springs Reservoir.

"We can't let criminals raid stockpiles

of high explosives right in our backyard to sell them to the highest bidder," he said. "Uniform national standards for safeguarding such materials must be established and enforced. Our continuing inquiry into this issue will produce these standards and pro-

vide for ways to enforce them."

A key member of the House Government Reform Committee, Tom serves on its Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations. On his urging, the subcommittee held an initial hearing in August 2004 on the disappearance of more than 200 pounds of high explosives and other materials from a San Mateo County Sheriff's Department storage facility near the Reservoir. This inquiry revealed that federal authorities do not know how many such facilities there are, where they are, or whether they are adequately safeguarded.

At the latest public hearing, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report that Tom commissioned on the extent of the problem nationwide. GAO officials said there are hundreds of storage sheds for high explosives and weapons in the United States, and the quality of monitoring and securing these facilities varies widely. Upon reviewing this report and witness testimony, Tom and Subcommittee Chairman Christopher Shays determined that new federal legislation will be needed. They introduced a bill to address the issue in November.



Conducting an Inquiry into a Threat to the Community - *On Tom's urging, a House Government Reform subcommittee held a hearing in San Mateo to find out how much action, if any, federal officials have taken to prevent the theft of high explosives from law enforcement bunkers. Here Tom questions Louis P. Raden, the assistant director of Enforcement Programs and Services Division of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.*

Tom's Major Legislative Achievements in 2005

Tom Lantos has been working hard on behalf of constituents and the causes that are important to you. As the start of the second session of the 109th Congress gets under way, here are some of the highlights of his work in the first session:

Devil's Slide Tunnel

2005 was the year when Tom achieved his goal of securing substantial federal funds for this project. During the early 1980s, severe winter rains made the vital coastal route through Pacifica impassible, and it continued to present a long-term potential hazard.

- Obtained \$150 million for construction of a long-awaited bypass under the Emergency Relief program within the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Glen Park in San Francisco

This plan will build neighborhood mass transportation connections and improve pedestrian safety, as well as enhance local business vitality, build transit-served housing and explore ways of helping Glen Park flourish while retaining its character.

- Obtained \$3.5 million to assist with implementing the Glen Park Community Plan.

Grand Boulevard Initiative

This project will revitalize the historic El Camino Real, providing new medians, wider sidewalks, bike lanes, and improved pedestrian safety and transit station access to help rejuvenate communities on El Camino from Daly City to San Carlos.

- Secured \$3 million for the Grand Boulevard Initiative.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area

In December Congress passed Tom's legislation to add 4700 acres to the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA). This included a 4000-acre site at Rancho Corral de Tierra, one of the largest tracts of undeveloped land along the San Mateo County coast that includes Montara Mountain, and a large stretch of state property near Devil's Slide. Inclusion in the GGNRA will preserve these green areas from development permanently.

San Francisco International Airport

An expected future increase of passengers and baggage, in addition to changes in

safety standards for airports, have made it necessary to rehabilitate runway lighting and taxiways, to make security enhancements and to make other improvements.

- Obtained \$22 million for these projects.

BART service to the S.F. Airport

Opened for service in June 2003, the four-station extension of BART service from Colma to the Airport and to Millbrae relies heavily on federal support.

- Led the Bay Area Congressional delegation in securing commitment for \$750 million in federal funds initially, and in 2005 obtained \$82 million.

Half Moon Bay and San Carlos Airports

Authorities needed funds for engineering design work for taxiway rehabilitation, drainage, construction of an access road and installation of a perimeter fence.

- Secured \$250,000 for Half Moon Bay Airport and \$285,000 for San Carlos Airport.

Ferry service

The San Francisco Bay Water Transit

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Strong track record on issues affecting women - For his dedication to public service and his legislative record on issues of interest to women, Tom received a Leadership Award from the National Foundation for Women Legislators. He delivered remarks on recent legislation affecting reproductive rights. Pictured here with Tom are officers of the NFWL and state legislators who presented the award.



New outreach staffer - Johnny Wang has brought his considerable talents to the San Mateo office as our newest field representative. He is helping in particular with Chinese-American and other Asian community outreach. A U.C. Berkeley alumnus and Bay Area resident since age nine, Johnny's track record in public affairs includes work for the San Francisco Neighborhood Parks Council, and his projects in the private sector have embraced everything from multinational investment projects to the aerospace business in Europe and the Middle East.

This is YOUR newsletter, too!

Tom wants to keep constituents up to speed on his work on your behalf; that's why he mails these regular newsletters and sends a bi-weekly e-newsletter on additional topics to all who are interested. And it helps to hear about the ways that these publications can be of use to you.

What kinds of information would you like to see in these pages? Which articles do you enjoy? Do you read the newsletter every time it comes in the mail?

We would like your feedback so we can make this newsletter the best it can be. The quickest way to provide your viewpoint is through the Web site at www.house.gov/lantos, just click on "Contact Tom"

2005 Legislative Achievements

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Authority is setting up a ferry line from Oyster Point in South San Francisco to the downtown Ferry building, the first new ferry route in the Bay Area in more than a decade. This service will meet the transit needs of San Mateo County's biotechnology center. It will link this huge employment hub with residential centers in San Francisco and the East Bay, and will help reduce congestion on local roads.

- Obtained nearly \$4 million to build a new ferry passenger terminal at Oyster Point in South San Francisco and \$800,000 for an additional ferry.

Highway 101 Improvements

The San Mateo County Transportation Authority (SMCTA) plans to add auxiliary lanes in both directions on Highway 101 from Millbrae Avenue to Third Avenue, to rebuild overpasses, and to install ramp meters.

- Secured \$3 million for this essential project.

Crime Lab for San Mateo County Sheriff

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Forensics Laboratory is purchasing several key pieces of equipment that will support evidence analysis. The Laboratory provides scientific support to criminal justice agencies at the local, state and national levels enabling them to detect, apprehend and prosecute criminals by utilizing accurate, useful and timely laboratory analysis and testimony.

- Obtained \$600,000 for these improvements.

Fire Department Grants

Funds from the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program provide support for training, equipment, personal protective equipment, wellness and fitness, and modification to fire stations and facilities.

- Departments in San Bruno, South San Francisco, Daly City and San Mateo received a total of \$490,000 for a variety of equipment needs, including 60 self-contained breathing kits, portable radios, and turnout gear. The funds will also help implement a mobile Fire and Life Safety Inspection Program and community fire prevention education programs.

Bay Trail

- The San Francisco Bay Trail will receive \$1 million to construct a bicycle/ pedestrian over-crossing at Highway 101 to connect the trail at Bayfront Park to the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) station in Millbrae.

GGNRA Trails

- Obtained \$600,000 for park access and trails at multiple sites of the Coastal Trail and trail connectors within the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, including Mori Point.

San Pedro Creek Bridge in Pacifica

San Pedro Creek is currently flood-prone, and the bridge on Highway 1, a major link between San Francisco and Half Moon Bay, needs to be replaced in order to provide 100-year storm capacity.

- Pacifica will receive \$2.5 million to replace the San Pedro Creek Bridge.

Health Improvement and Professionals Act

Interim step to relieve the critical nursing shortage by changing the procedures used by the Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of Homeland Security. This legislation assigns unused, employment-based visas to nurses from India, China and the Philippines, countries that have oversubscribed their allotted visa number. Allowing more qualified nurses from the Philippines is not a permanent panacea for our nursing shortage, but this step corrects a bureaucratic regulation that was preventing qualified nurses from serving in our hospitals. It is a positive first step to continue to ensure that America has the best health care in the world.

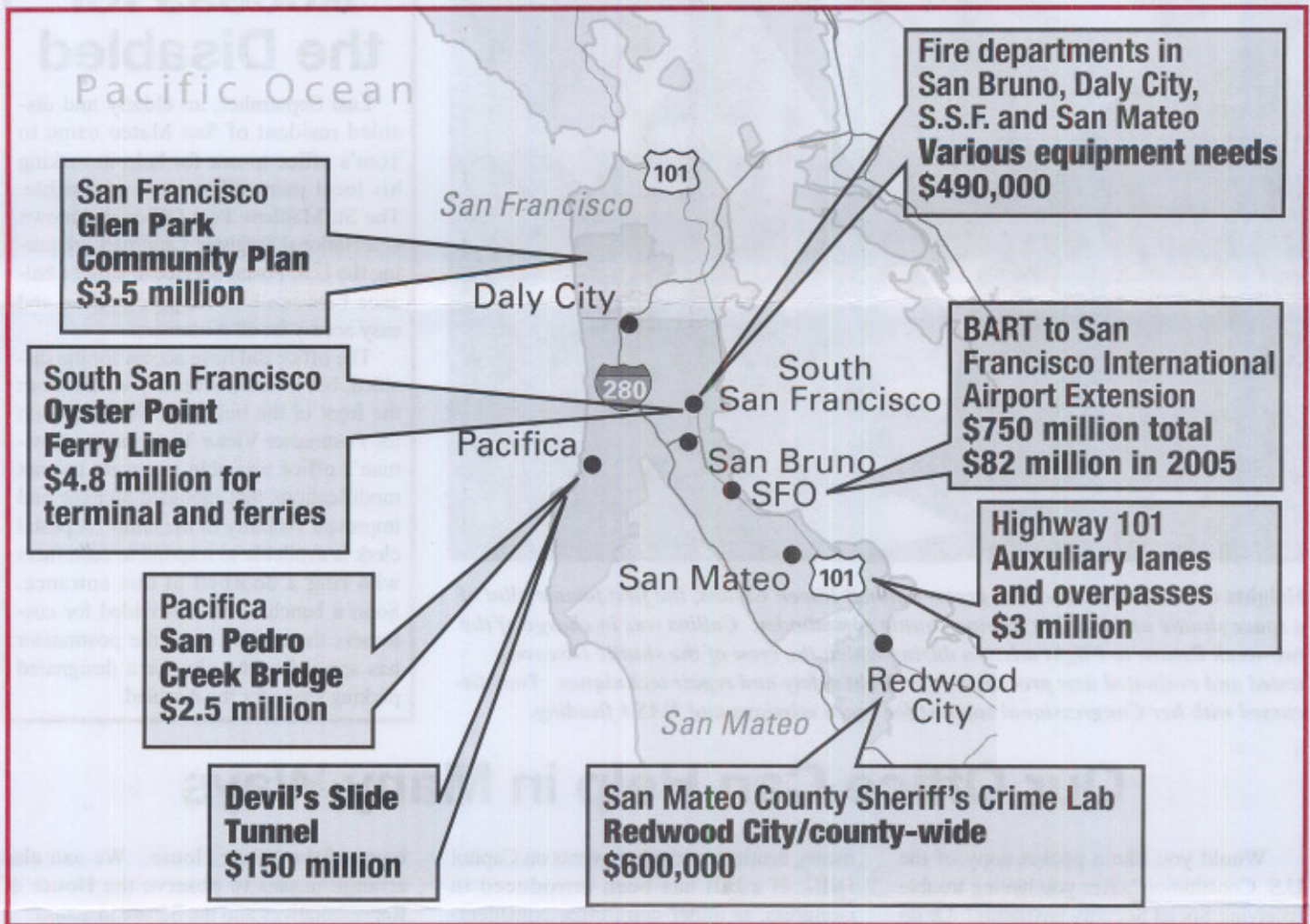
United Nations Reform

Authored legislation calling for extensive reforms to restore integrity to management of the United Nations, while vigorously opposing attempts to withhold dues to the UN that support critical U.S. interests such as elections in Afghanistan and Iraq, Peacekeeping missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone, and efforts to fight infectious disease.

Human Rights

Worked closely with UN Secretary General Annan in his effort to replace the discredited UN Human Rights Commission that is dominated by Members such as Syria, the Sudan, and Cuba who are serial human rights abusers, with a new UN Human Rights Council specifically designed to exclude violators.

Federal funds Tom has obtained for high-priority local projects



Honoring Exceptional Law Enforcement - Tom presented a statement from the Congressional Record to San Mateo County Sheriff Don Horsely to commemorate the tireless work of the Sheriff's Office canine unit. The 44-year-old outfit is the longest-operating canine unit in California and the only such unit in San Mateo County to provide full time patrol coverage, twenty-four hours a day, seven days per week.

Fighting to eliminate assault weapons – Tom led the charge to renew the 10-year federal ban on assault weapons, co-sponsoring bipartisan legislation and arranging a news conference with Republican and Democratic members of the House. “It is unthinkable that responsible authorities in our country would deliberately let assault weapons flood the market,” he said. “Our police officers want this ban to stay in place, and to be strengthened. Teachers and parents in communities across the country want this ban to continue to keep our children safe. Why aren’t the Republican Congressional leadership and the White House prepared to do that?”





Heights of Achievement - Tom greets Colonel Eileen Collins, the first female pilot of a space shuttle and the first woman shuttle commander. Collins was in charge of the two-week Return to Flight mission during which the crew of the shuttle Discovery tested and evaluated new procedures for flight safety and repair techniques. Tom discussed with her Congressional support for space missions and NASA funding.

Ombudsman

Improving Access for the Disabled

Last September, an elderly and disabled resident of San Mateo came to Tom's office to ask for help in making his local post office more accessible. The St. Matthew Post Office downtown is a National Register Landmark, requiring the U.S. Postal Service to strike a balance between historic preservation and easy access for all customers.

The office did have access for the disabled, but it was not readily visible from the front of the building. Working with the Postmaster Victor Tom, the congressman's office was able to ensure prompt modifications that included signage and improved visibility of the ramp. A postal clerk is available to respond to customers who ring a doorbell at this entrance. Soon a bench will be provided for customers there, too. And the postmaster has applied to the city for a designated parking space for the disabled.

Our Office Can Help in Many Ways

Would you like a pocket copy of the U.S. Constitution? Are you having trouble receiving Social Security payments? Or do you need help planning a trip to the nation's capital? Our office in San Mateo can help with all this, and more. From the Peninsula, just call (650) 342-0300. In San Francisco, phone (415) 566-5257.

Here are some of the services we most often provide to residents of the 12th District:

Busting the bureaucracy at federal government agencies - If you've run into obstacles in a request for information or documents from an agency in Washington, let us know. Tom often contacts government officials to resolve such problems for his constituents.

Fast information on the doings of Congress - We're happy to help constituents keep up with legislative develop-

ments, hearings and other events on Capitol Hill. If a bill has been introduced in Congress, is under committee consideration, or has been voted upon in the House or Senate, we can help you find out more about it, and even provide a copy.

Small business boost - We can help you seek a loan from the Small Business Administration and provide information about SBA seminars.

Flags flown over the U.S. Capitol - Mark a special occasion with a flag flown over the U.S. Capitol, and receive a certificate specifying the date of the event. There is a modest cost for the flag and shipping fees. Please allow eight to 12 weeks for delivery.

Help for visitors to Washington - We have information for constituents on visits to attractions such as the Library of Congress and the Supreme Court and group

tours of the White House. We can also arrange passes to observe the House of Representatives and the Senate in action.

Assistance for seniors - We can help determine which health care services are eligible for Medicare coverage, and Tom can intervene when there are reimbursement difficulties. We can also provide information about various Social Security programs, including retirement and survivor benefits, disability and Supplemental Security Income.

Service academy appointments - Each year, Tom recommends a select group of high school graduates for admission to the U.S. service academies: Army, Navy, Air Force and Merchant Marine. Nominations are made on a competitive basis. Interested applicants should contact the San Mateo office in their junior year.

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Official Business

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Presorted Standard
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12th CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
CALIFORNIA**